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GREUZE.

THE engravings after Greuze which THE ART AMATEUR offers this month to its readers fairly represent an important class of the artist's pictures—his heads of young girls and of children. It is by these that, outside of France, he is best known, and in our country the few original works by Greuze (with one important exception) that are found in our museums, and even the copies, belong to the same category. The Metropolitan Museum has a "Head of a Young Girl," said in the catalogue to be the study made by the master for one of the figures in "The Father's Curse," belonging to the Louvre, and which was among the pictures selected by M. Jules Jacquemart from the Blodget collection of old masters to be etched for the Museum. The Historical Society boasts of no less than five examples; "A Nymph of Diana," "Portrait of the Duc de Choiseul," "Head of a Young Girl," "Virginie," and a "Sketch of a Female Head." Of these examples the "Portrait of the Duc de Choiseul" seems to us not at all like Greuze; the "Virginie" is certainly a copy and not a good one, while the two small pictures are hung too high to be judged. "The Nymph of Diana" is evidently an original picture by somebody, and not a copy, and if it be by Greuze is certainly one of the most pleasing works by him that we have seen anywhere. Except that he did at one time show a leaning toward classical subjects, rather in the direction, however, of history than mythology, and that we find him exhibiting, in 1761, a "Head of a Nymph of Diana," it must be said that the theme is one so out of his line, that the name of Greuze is the last that would occur to us had we been asked to name the author of this picture. There is a candor, an absence of affectation, a purity in the treatment that cannot be said to be characteristic of Greuze's work in general, and the color too has a brightness and fresh, virginal sweetness that we certainly do not find in his undoubted pictures. We have always liked this picture and wished more were known about its history than is vouchsafed us in the catalogue. Mr. Bryan was always so confident as to the authenticity of his pictures, and so little disposed to listen to doubts or suggestions—resembling in this respect amateurs and collectors in general everywhere—that there was not much use in trying to find out more than he chose to put in print or to depute others to print. But we are content with the possession of this very attractive picture, and for the sake of Greuze are very glad to believe it his.

All the biographies of Greuze except one, and that the most careful of all, agree in giving him the baptismal name of Jean Baptiste. But Edmond and Jules de Goncourt give his record of baptism in full, and he there appears officially as Jean, the legitimate son of Jean-Louis Greuze, master tiler, residing at Tournus, and of Claudine Roch his wife, born August 21st, 1725. Tournus is a town of something over five thousand inhabitants on the road from Paris to Lyons. It

is picturesquely built amphitheatre fashion on the right bank of the Saône, and a bridge of five arches connects it with the suburb on the opposite shore. The town still cherishes the memory of Greuze, but has little to show of his art beyond one poor picture in the church of the Madeleine. The fame of Greuze belongs to Paris where he early went to seek his fortune, and where at the age of eighty, having been for long years the idol of the gay world, he died in solitude and in misery mourned by his faithful daughter, deserted by his miserable wife, and followed to his grave by only two of his friends.

The craft by which the father of Greuze made his living was not that of a simple tiler or thatcher; he was a master-tiler by which we are rather to understand a contractor, or undertaker of works of some importance. It was natural, therefore, that he should wish his son to take a step higher in the world, just as

able, no one of them made any resistance, except it were the father of La Tour, one of the great portrait painters, whose parent was bent on making a civil engineer of him in spite of his being near-sighted. The story of Greuze was like that of the rest: his father wanted to make him an architect; as he had tiled houses, he wanted his son to build houses, and he held out until, one day, the boy brought him what he thought was an engraving, but which turned out to be only a clever sort of fac-simile of an engraving which the child had made with pen and ink. Pleased with the work and seeing that nature knew better than himself, he sent his son to Lyons, the nearest large city to Tournus, and put him to study with Gromdon, a picture manufacturer, in whose shop poor Greuze learned, we fear, something of that fatal facility which has given to his own work, taken as a whole, so much the appearance of manufacture. Still, there

was too much of the real fire in the boy to allow him to rest content in such a plodding life. He set off for Paris on his own account, with no fortune but his ambitious dreams, his consciousness of a talent peculiar to himself, and one picture, in which so far at least as the subject was concerned the field in which that talent was to display itself was indicated: "The Father of a Family Explaining the Bible to his Children."

M. de Goncourt, who certainly does full justice to Greuze's talent (and were it not that the high prices brought even today by his pictures would seem to justify his estimate, we should be inclined to say, does him more than justice), yet feels moved to remonstrate against the use which he made of that talent. De Goncourt says: "This determination to make his art a preacher of morality is felt in all the work of Greuze. He is never tired of pointing out the existence of this moral idea, he emphasizes it, he thinks he has never made it plain enough, he thrusts it upon us in the very titles of his pictures; often indeed to make it clear that this is his aim, he must write it down for us in the margin of his sketches. With what cheap moralities he dresses out his allegories! 'The end of marriage: two beings join their forces to ward off the ills of life: let us suppose life to be a river.' I have seen these very words written with a pencil in his own hand under the sketch of a boat gliding along a stream and containing a man, a woman, and some children. He was strongly moved by the example of Hogarth, who developed in a series of engravings, 'The Rake's Progress' and 'The Idle and Industrious Apprentice,' the life of a libertine, and he himself cherished the notion of one day painting in this double fashion the history of the good and of the evil life. To make his way to the heart of the public by the same road that the poet, the orator, the romance-writer takes, to put before us forms from which as we look at them a moral idea seems to disengage itself, to win us to virtue by strokes of the pencil, to make the muse of painting a distributor of tracts—such was the dream which abused the sleep of the painter predestined to found in France the unhappy school of



"MME. CHAMPCENETZ." BY GREUZE.

IN THE COLLECTION OF H. DE GREFFHULE.

perhaps he himself had advanced from the trade of his father to his own more lucrative position. It is worth noting how many of the painters of this time, rich in men of talent, sprang from fathers with whose occupations art might be supposed to have little to do. Fragonard was the son of a trader who lost his fortune in speculation and came to Paris to better himself, but met with so little success that he was glad to take a place as a clerk in a haberdasher's shop. Prudhon was the son of a stone-cutter. Watteau had like Greuze for father a master tiler. Chardin the elder was a cabinet-maker though in good employ, Boucher, alone among the group, was the son of a painter, though his father was a painter of no merit, and La Tour was the son of a musician of one of the royal chapels. And in only one of these cases, that of Boucher, was the real vocation of the boy discovered by the father, although it is true that when it was once pointed out or shown by circumstances to be inevit-

able, no one of them made any resistance, except it were the father of La Tour, one of the great portrait painters, whose parent was bent on making a civil engineer of him in spite of his being near-sighted. The story of Greuze was like that of the rest: his father wanted to make him an architect; as he had tiled houses, he wanted his son to build houses, and he held out until, one day, the boy brought him what he thought was an engraving, but which turned out to be only a clever sort of fac-simile of an engraving which the child had made with pen and ink. Pleased with the work and seeing that nature knew better than himself, he sent his son to Lyons, the nearest large city to Tournus, and put him to study with Gromdon, a picture manufacturer, in whose shop poor Greuze learned, we fear, something of that fatal facility which has given to his own work, taken as a whole, so much the appearance of manufacture. Still, there

literary painters and of art that usurps the place of the pulpit." Even though we may sympathize with M. de Goncourt in his dislike of the pronounced tendency of a certain school in France to mix with their colors aims and motives with which art has really nothing to do, it certainly is not fair to accuse Greuze of being the introducer of this mistaken practice. It has existed in art for a much longer time than his remarks would seem to indicate, and even according to his own showing it was to Hogarth rather than to Greuze that the fatal step was due. And considering what the times were, and how very thin was the moral gauze that Greuze spread over his subjects and into how few of them any appreciable amount of morality entered at all, we think he hardly deserves the credit of so much influence as M. de Goncourt attributes to him. Surely this sort of thing was in the air all over Northern Europe, in Germany, in England, and even in France, and the insistence of morals was in proportion to the open license of the time which pervaded all ranks, and was most marked among the moralists themselves. It is interesting to read the story of Greuze's household, with his dissolute wife at the head of it, and his mean-spirited submission to her irregularities, and then to see how little moral fibre there is in the sermons he was so fond of painting.

It was only by his sentimentality, so exactly in accord with the spirit of his time, that Greuze won his way. His color was never good, and it is because of its bright and clear coloring, so opposed to the general practice of the artist, that we are in doubt as to his authorship of the nymph in the Historical Society, and his drawing is notoriously incorrect. But there is an innocence, however superficial, and a sweetness, even if it be never quite free from consciousness, in the heads of his young girls and children, which, in the time of Rousseau, St. Pierre, and the German sentimentalists, was felt to be quite à la mode. There were not wanting sharp eyes, however, to spy out Greuze's make-believe, and Diderot, his fast friend, was as little deceived as if he had been an enemy searching for weak places in the artist's armor. It was not precisely the picture we have engraved, but another "Young Girl Lamenting the Death of her Bird," about which Diderot wrote so gayly, so to all appearance amiably, and yet with such malicious pungency, in his review of the Salon of 1765, for Greuze painted this subject several times, each time varying his composition somewhat. And it may be remarked in passing that it is in the preface to what he has to say about this picture, that we find some of his more striking expressions—that, for instance, which has become famous: "Our good qualities, some of them at least, are very nearly related to our faults." This is apropos of what he has to say of Greuze's vanity: "He is a little vain, this painter of ours" (he addressed these notes to his friend Grimm), "but his vanity is that of a child; he is intoxicated with his own talent. Take away from his character that simple-heartedness which makes him cry out at the sight of his own works, 'Look at that, now, and tell me if it is not beautiful!' he would lose his spirit, his fire would die out, and his genius hide under a cloud. I very much fear that if he were once to become modest he would find life no longer worth living."

Like many a man who has a marked talent for some one thing, that all the world recognizes, and by the exercise of which he gains fame and coins money, Greuze thought that he had a talent for something

very different. He was made by nature expressly to paint such subjects as we have engraved for our readers, but he was sure that he had a genius for painting history, and he grudged that his great ability in this direction was denied. He was elected to the Academy, but he could not receive his diploma until he should have complied with the regulations by sending in a picture to be passed upon by the Council. He delayed this so long and paid so little attention to the repeated remonstrances of the artists that at length he was informed, politely but firmly, that he could not be allowed to exhibit until he had obeyed the rules. He then sent in a large historical picture, "Septimus Severus Reproaching his son Caracalla for having Attempted his Life in the Highlands of Scotland, and saying to him, 'If you wish my death, order Papinian to kill me.'" The Council of the Academy met, and while Greuze, confident of success, awaited their award in the antechamber, the Academicians gravely examined the piece, and having

gained are higher and higher. But with the world at large he hardly holds his place. We ask for more scientific painting, for correcter drawing, and as for the subject we prefer either a more robust virtue or less prudery in concealing the want of it.

RESTORATIONS OF SCULPTURE IN EUROPEAN MUSEUMS.

(CONCLUDED.)

It should be remembered that the presence of clever and probable restorations, however acknowledged and however visible, is apt to mislead even the somewhat careful student. Writers who, like Mr. Symonds (to take a notable instance and a good one, for no such writer is more conscientious or more prudent), are accustomed to compare one art with another, or art with literature, in the search for light upon thought and upon human nature in classic times, are always in danger of reasoning from the completed statue or group, as if all parts of it were equally authentic. The ancient torso, with limbs and a nose of good modern work, accepted as a complete work of art by too many students during several generations, has become a complete work of art in the mind of the man who, at a distance and recalling his strong impressions, seeks to draw from them conclusions and beliefs which will be based upon not quite trustworthy material. Even professedly archæological writers are misled in that way. Our books of examples give us, as authentic ancient work, much-restored statues; and even one of the latest, Mr. Murray's "Greek Sculpture before Phidias," will be found to give an illustration of the Harmodius and Aristogeiton of Naples with the wrongly-adjusted head, described before, as if an original part of the statue to which it is attached. It will be said that a remedy for the mischief of restoration is found in giving an exact account of the restorations made. And this would be a good way if there were not a better—that is, the simple leaving them *not* made. Little by little the museums of Europe are coming into line, with more or less complete statements as to the mischief done. The Louvre has it in a little framed poster on each pedestal. The Capitol Museum, the Dresden Museum, and some others—alas! too few—have it clearly set forth in

their catalogues. The Uffizzi catalogue has it, sometimes in the text, sometimes in a note, in such fashion that one is never sure whether to expect it when most needed. The catalogue of the Munich Glyptothek is the model one in this respect: every modern scrap is carefully indicated and described, and the judicious author has something to say by way of criticism of the more unfortunate instances of mistaken addition. But half the museums are without catalogues at present, leaving the student to imagine what fine ones his successors will have to guide them when their turn comes.

The Dresden Museum of Antiques in the Japanese Palace is not too admirable in the condition of its works of art; the German guide-books even agree as to the "ergänzt" condition of most of its sculptures. But its perhaps most valuable, certainly most curious possession, the archaic Athene, with the heavily embroidered border hanging down the front of her peplos, is unaltered. Two pedestals stand out in the room, well toward the windows; the one supports the origi-



"THE DEAD BIRD." BY GREUZE.

IN THE COLLECTION OF THE BARONESS NATHANIEL ROTHSCHILD.

made up their minds without loss of time, ordered the doors to be opened and Greuze to be summoned. "Sir," said the Director, "you are admitted to the Academy, and I will administer the oath," and, the ceremony, finished, he resumed, "The Academy has received you, but it welcomes you as a genre painter, not as a painter of history. The Academy remembers your former works, which deserve all praise; as for this, it is unworthy both of the Academy and of you." All the high hopes of Greuze vanished into thin air at the word; in vain he attempted to defend himself; the Council listened with ill-concealed amusement, and when he persisted, the artist Lagrenée drew a pencil from his pocket and corrected before his eyes some of the mistakes in the drawing. Greuze withdrew in anger, and never exhibited again at the Academy.

Greuze's reputation as a painter of heads and of genre pictures, domesticities and moralities, still keeps its hold on the collector's heart in France, and at every sale where his pictures appear the prices